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CONSTITUTION

IV.

OF THE

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

OF C O L U M B I A ,

WITH

An Introduction,

EMBRACING THE PRINCIPAL POINTS OF AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

REV. DR. THORNWELL,

AT THE

FORMATION OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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COLUMBIA:

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## INTRODUCTION.

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A few remarks upon the design, peculiarities and advantages of THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, may not be inappropriate as an Introduction to the following Constitution.

I. The design is, in general, to promote the spiritual improvement of its members, and of all who can be brought within the reach of its influence. It is strictly a Christian Association: a body of men recognizing the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only instrument of an effective discipline in this life, as well as the only means of safety and happiness in that which is to come. The Cross of Christ is the ultimate foundation of all culture and improvement. It was that Cross which introduced HOPE into our world; and the great principle which that Cross embodies and illustrates—the principle of life from death—has been impressed upon every department of human effort as the condition of success. The grace which the Cross imparts is the only security for character, and no scheme for the amelioration of manners, or the elevation of society, can be permanently effective without the recognition of the Gospel. As the life of our fallen world sprang from the tomb of Jesus, so our first step towards true excellence is to die with him, and then rise with him by the power of the same spirit. While the general design of the Association is spiritual, it seeks to subordinate to its prime end many minor ones, which in themselves are natural and secular.

1. It aims at the intellectual improvement of its members. It will institute Lectures upon matters of business or of science; upon arts, trades and professions, which cannot fail to be eminently useful. It will endeavor to create a taste for profitable reading; to stimulate the desire of mental culture, and to turn the activities of the young, in their hours of leisure and recreation, into salutary channels. As ignorance is not the mother of devotion, it is confidently hoped that a spirit of inquiry, awakened under healthful influences, will not, in many cases at least, stop short of the question which supremely concerns us all as sinners. The Association, in this

way, proposes to achieve all the good contemplated by Lyceums and merely literary clubs, without the dangers of perversion and abuse to which they are exposed. These, in some cases, having begun with laudable professions, have ended in infidel cabals or drunken debauches. They wanted the security afforded by the Christian basis which is here supplied.

2. It also aims to furnish the means of social enjoyment to the young men of the city. It is a Society of young men, prepared for the reception and entertainment of young men. The stranger, who comes from the country, need not feel himself alone or destitute of friends; there are arms and hearts ready to receive him. He need not be driven to haunts of dissipation and vice to spend his leisure hours; there are social circles in which he may freely move, and in which he will be saved from the temptations to which solitude would expose him. What young men, coming to a strange place, most particularly want, is, the restraining and elevating influence of society. If destitute of a taste for books, or of a noble ambition, they are very apt to betake themselves to forbidden places, or forbidden pursuits, in quest of recreation and enjoyment. This want our Association wishes to supply. It will keep its eye upon all young men who come among us; will introduce them into the society they need, and guard them against the temptations which most easily beset them. In this way it will become pre-eminently a Society for the protection of the young.

3. It further proposes to discharge the offices of Christian kindness and charity to the afflicted and sick; it will exemplify the spirit of the Gospel in those circumstances in which sympathy and aid are most needed.

II. As the Association is fundamentally Christian, the first care of the framers of the Constitution has been to preserve its Christian character. This has been done by a distribution of its members into classes; none can vote but those who are communicating members of some Evangelical Church. Others can enjoy all the other advantages of the Society; they have free access to its library and reading-room; are permitted to take part in its discussions; to share in its offices of charity and love; are entitled, in other words, to every privilege but that of voting. By this arrangement the character of the

Association never can be changed; the spirit which animates it never can become extinct; it never can be diverted from its Divine ends and aims. The body of Christian young men, who have the exclusive right to vote, must always determine the kind and degree of influence exerted; they are the leaven whose fermentation is felt in the whole mass; the centre of attraction and of power. But, if its members were restricted to the pious, it would be hardly more than a Society for mutual edification. It consequently includes all, whether converted or unconverted, who are willing to co-operate. In this way, the circle of its influence is enlarged, and the ways and methods of exerting it proportionably extended.

Another peculiarity of the Society is the studious care with which it abstains from the distinctive functions of the Church of Jesus Christ. It endeavors to turn secular instruments to a spiritual account. It has no other creed but those doctrines of catholic Christianity in which all who love the Lord Jesus Christ are heartily at one. It does not aim to train in religion itself, but to bring its members within the influence of whatever Evangelical Church they may prefer. The direct spiritual teaching and government it leaves where Christ and his Apostles left them, and is content with the humbler office of alluring men into Christian congregations; when there, the Churches are responsible for the instructions they receive. No man, therefore, can object to the Association on the ground that it supersedes the Church. On the contrary, it pre-supposes the Church, and simply undertakes to extend the sphere of its influence.

But there is one other peculiarity which deserves to be mentioned. It is a Young Men's Association, and yet provision has been made for securing the counsel and wisdom of age. It is a Christian Association, and yet it embraces and brings into a species of union young men whose only point of attraction is their equality in age. It strengthens the ties of brotherhood—guards the alliance by the double security of aged prudence and Christian power; the old are there to moderate—none but the pious can vote. This peculiarity is one of the most beautiful features in the whole plan. It wisely mingles in this Society what God has mingled in society at large, and mingled it in proportions and under checks which

cannot fail to be productive of good. The whole may be compared to a watch, in which the main spring is under the power of grace, and the rest of the machinery moved and regulated by this controlling influence.

III. Some of the advantages, and those the most important, of such an Association, are manifest from the ends it contemplates; but there is one light in which the matter deserves to be considered that may not be so obvious. If the Society is properly administered, it cannot fail to create a community of sympathy and feeling among all its members, how dissimilar soever their pursuits or their general tastes may be. They meet upon the common ground of their youth, and in co-operating, under that relation, they are made sensible of their common humanity, and are inspired with the feeling of brotherhood which this sentiment is obliged to create. They can no longer be strangers to each other, and each social circle of the young must exert an influence upon every other. A public opinion will be formed and circulate among them, analogous to that which exists in society at large. It is certainly an evil, incidental to the classes which diversity of wealth, taste, culture and occupation creates in every community, and especially in every city, that these classes become isolated from one another. They degenerate into castes which limit and circumscribe the sympathies and affections of their members with something like the rigor of oriental distinctions. These walls of exclusion should be broken down; the common sympathies of our nature should be encouraged to expand wherever that nature is found; and every one should endeavor to realize the maxim that nothing human is a stranger to his breast. This Association will accomplish this result in no mean degree. Without destroying any of the distinctions of Society, it will diffuse through all of them a common spirit. It will teach the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, the merchant and the clerk, that they are alike—men. It will soften the prejudices of class against class; disarm their jealousies, and make them all minister to the great end of our being. This is a most desirable result, and this consideration alone should commend the Association to the esteem and confidence of all who love their race.



## P R E A M B L E .

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We, the subscribers, actuated by a desire to promote the moral and religious welfare of the young men of this city, and impressed with the importance of united effort in accomplishing this object, in order to form an Association in which we may labor together for the great end proposed, hereby agree to adopt for our government the following

## C O N S T I T U T I O N .

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### ARTICLE I.—*Name and Object.*

NAME—Section 1.—The name of this Society shall be THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF COLUMBIA.

OBJECT—Section 2.—The object of this Association shall be, the improvement of the spiritual, mental and social condition of young men, by the ways and means to be hereinafter designated.

### ARTICLE II.—*Members.*

KINDS OF MEMBERS.—Section 1.—The members of this Association shall consist of four kinds, viz: Active, Associate, Life and Honorary Members.

ACTIVE MEMBERS—Section 2.—Any male, under fifty years of age, who is a member in good standing of an evangelical church, may become an Active Member, by the payment in advance of one dollar annually; all such members of and over eighteen years of age, shall have a right to vote at all meetings of the Association, and shall be eligible to office.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS—Section 3.—Any man of good moral character may become an Associate Member by the payment in advance of one dollar annually, and shall be entitled to all the privileges of the Association, the right to vote and eligibility to office only excepted.

LIFE MEMBERS—Section 4.—Any person may become a Life Member of this Association by the payment of twenty dollars, at any one

time, and if possessed of the qualifications mentioned in Section 2, may be enrolled at his request as Active Member.

HONORARY MEMBERS—Section 5.—Honorary Members may be constituted from those who, by their age, lose their active membership, and such others as may be proposed, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting of the Association, and shall be entitled to the privileges of Associate Members.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP—Section 6.—All applications for membership shall be made to the Committee on Applications, appointed as hereinafter provided.

### ARTICLE III.—*Officers.*

OFFICERS—Section 1.—The officers of this Association shall be a President, one Vice-President from each denomination represented in the Association, selected severally by their respective denominations, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer and a Librarian. The officers elect shall be members, *ex officio*, of the Board of Managers, and the Vice-Presidents shall constitute the Committee on Applications for Membership, four of whom shall constitute a quorum.

STANDING COMMITTEE—Section 2.—A Standing Committee, consisting of two members from each congregation represented in the Association, shall be annually appointed, and shall, with the officers elect, constitute a Board of Managers.

ELECTION—Section 3.—All the above-named officers shall be elected by ballot, at a meeting to be called for that purpose, one week subsequent to the annual meeting, and, in all cases, a majority of the votes cast shall be required to elect.

NOMINATION—Section 4.—At the monthly meeting next preceding the annual meeting, a committee, to consist of seven members, shall be appointed to nominate officers for the ensuing year.

### ARTICLE IV.—*Duties of Officers.*

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS—Section 1.—It shall be the duty of the President, or, in his absence, of the Vice-Presidents, in order of the Roll, to preside at all meetings of the Association and Board of Managers, and to preserve in strict exercise the rules established by parliamentary usage; he shall appoint all committees, except on special motion to the contrary. It shall also be the duty of the President to present, at the annual meeting of the Association, a full report of the doings and progress of the Association during the past year.

VICE-PRESIDENTS—Section 2.—The Vice-Presidents, as a Committee

on applications for membership, shall decide upon such applications in accordance with the second article of this Constitution, and report the same to the Recording Secretary; they shall, also, have the power to refuse, for good cause, any renewals of membership.

**RECORDING SECRETARY**—Section 3.—The Register shall keep a full and complete record of the name, place of business, and of residence, denomination and Church of each member of the Association, stating to which class of members he may belong, and when and by whom he was introduced to the Association; said record shall be kept open at the rooms of the Association for the inspection of its members. He shall also collect all moneys due the Association, rendering all accounts of the same to the Treasurer; for all of which service he shall be entitled to a reasonable compensation, to be determined by the Board of Managers.

**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**—Section 4.—The Corresponding Secretary shall be the organ of the Association in its conferences with other societies, and with the public; he shall copy, in a book kept for that purpose, all letters written by him, and file all those received, relating to the affairs of the Association.

**TREASURER**—Section 5.—The Treasurer shall collect all funds due the Association, and disburse the same under the direction of the Committee on Finance, and shall keep a full and correct account of his transactions, and report to the Board of Managers, when so required, and to the Association at its annual meeting.

**LIBRARIAN**—Section 6.—It shall be the duty of the Librarian to have charge of the Library and Reading Room, and to keep in order all books, papers, documents, and other movable property of the Association, and a correct catalogue and account of the same; and, also, a record of all books delivered to the members of the Association.

**BOARD OF MANAGERS**—Section 7.—The Board of Managers shall annually appoint from its number six committees, one member of each being a Vice-President of the Association, viz.:—1st, Committee on Library and Reading Room; 2d, Committee on Rooms; 3d, Committee on Publication; 4th, Committee on Lectures; 5th, Committee on Finance; 6th, Committee on Statistics; and shall assign to these Committees their respective duties. They shall supervise the general interest of the Association, and shall make such rules for their own government as are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Constitution. They shall hold their meetings monthly, but special meetings may be called by the President, at his discretion, or at the request of five members; seven members to constitute a quorum thereof.

STANDING COMMITTEE—Section 8.—The members of the Standing Committee shall exert themselves to interest the congregations to which they respectively belong, in the object and welfare of the Association. They shall labor to induce all suitable young men to connect themselves with the Association, and use all practicable means for increasing its membership, activity, and usefulness. The Committee shall report at each regular meeting of the Association.

#### ARTICLE V.—*Duties of Members.*

The members of the Association shall seek out young men taking up their residence in Columbia, and endeavor to bring them under moral and religious influences, by aiding them in the selection of suitable boarding places and employment, by introducing them to the members and privileges of the Association, securing their attendance at some place of worship on the Sabbath, and by every means in their power surrounding them with Christian associates; and, shall constantly strive to promote the accomplishment of the objects of the Association.

#### ARTICLE VI.—*Vacancies in Office.*

HOW FILLED.—In case of any vacancy occurring in the offices, the Board of Managers shall have power to fill the same until the next annual election.

#### ARTICLE VII.—*Meetings.*

MONTHLY—Section 1.—There shall be a meeting of the Association on the first Tuesday evening of each month, for the proposal and election of members, for the promotion of Christian and social intercourse, and for the reception and consideration of such information as will advance the welfare of the Association.

ANNUAL—Section 2.—There shall be an annual meeting of the Association on the Tuesday after second Monday in December of each year, at which the reports of the President and Treasurer shall be read.

SPECIAL—Section 3.—Special meetings of the Association, for the transaction of business, may be called by the President, at the written request of five members thereof.

QUORUM—Section 4.—Thirteen members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting where business is to be transacted.

HOW OPENED AND CLOSED—Section 5.—All meetings of the Association shall be opened and closed with religious exercises.

#### ARTICLE VIII.—*Amendments.*

The provisions of this Constitution, by which none but members in good standing of Evangelical Churches, may vote or hold office, shall

never be annulled ; and no amendment of this Constitution may be made which, if made, would allow these said provisions to be annulled.

In other respects, this Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting of the Association, provided such alteration or amendment shall have been proposed at a meeting at least one month previous.

#### ARTICLE IX.—*Incorporation.*

This Association shall be incorporated according to the Act of Assembly, in such case made and provided.

BY-LAWS  
OF THE  
BOARD OF MANAGERS.

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ARTICLE I.—*Meetings.*

Section 1.—Regular Meetings of the Board shall be called on the second Wednesday after Regular Meetings of the Association. Special Meetings shall be called at the request of any five Managers, or whenever the President may direct.

Sec. 2.—All meetings of the Board shall be announced to its members by circular, by the Recording Secretary.

Sec. 3.—All meetings of the Board shall be opened with prayer.

Sec. 4.—Five Managers shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Sec. 5.—The following shall be the order of business :

1. Prayer.
2. Calling the roll.
3. Reading the minutes.
4. Receiving reports of Permanent Committees of the Board.
5. Unfinished business, including reports from committees appointed at previous meetings.
6. New business.
7. Adjournment with prayer.

ARTICLE II.—*Committees and their Duties.*

Section 1.—The Board of Managers shall annually divide itself into six committees, (agreeably to Art. IV., Sec. 7, of the Constitution,) the chairman of each committee being a Vice-President of the Association.

Sec. 2.—The Committee on Library and Reading Rooms shall use all suitable means for the procurement, increase and preservation of the Library, exercise a general supervision over the same, make proper rules for the government thereof, report to the Board any delinquency on the part of the Librarian, approve all publications previous to their admission to the Library, and provide all necessary papers and periodicals for the use of the members of the Association.

Sec. 3.—The Committee on Rooms shall procure proper places for the meetings of the Association, and make provision for furnishing, lighting, warming, and keeping the same in order.

Sec. 4.—The Committee on Publication shall superintend the printing and publication of books, documents, reports, circulars, and other matter issued by the Association.

Sec. 5.—The Committee on Lectures shall provide for the delivery of public lectures or sermons, at such times as it shall seem to the Board expedient, upon subjects adapted to the spiritual and mental improvement of young men. They shall make arrangements for the Anniversary, and other public meetings of the Association.

Sec. 6.—The Committee on Finance shall propose to the Board of Managers a plan or plans for obtaining the necessary funds in carrying on the operations of the Association, and shall execute any plan that may be decided upon by the Board. They shall approve all accounts previous to their payment by the Treasurer, shall audit the Treasurer's account at the end of the current year, and whenever said account is required.

Sec. 7.—A Committee on Statistics, who shall endeavor to ascertain how many young men and others are communicants in the several Churches in this city, the number who attend divine worship, and such facts as may show to what extent, and in what manner, the Sabbath is desecrated. They shall, also, collect and preserve every species of information respecting the history and condition of the religious denominations in the United States, and of moral, benevolent and philanthropic organizations, and endeavor, in every practicable way, to procure a correct and full account of the past and present condition of morals and religion in the City of Columbia, and throughout the country.

Sec. 8.—Each of the Committees shall report to the Board at its regular meetings.

### ARTICLE III.—*Amendments, &c.*

These By-Laws may be amended or repealed by a vote of two-thirds of the Managers present, at a regular or special meeting of the Board, provided notice shall have been given at a previous meeting of the proposed amendment or repeal.

STATEMENT  
OF  
SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL MEANS  
BY WHICH  
THE ASSOCIATION EFFECTS ITS OBJECTS.

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ORDER OF EXERCISES FOR THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS.

1. Reading the Scriptures and Prayer.
2. Reading the Journal of the preceding meeting.
3. An Essay by a member of the Association on a subject previously assigned to him by the Committee on Essays and Reviews. The subject of the Essay to be of a moral or religious character, not sectarian or political, in length limited to fifteen minutes, and then the subject to be thrown open to the Association, for general conversation, for thirty minutes more.

The Essay to alternate monthly, if practicable, with a written Review of some book. The Review to be subject to the same restrictions as the Essay.

4. An interval of fifteen minutes, to be devoted to mutual introductions, interchange of feeling, and general conversation.

5. Miscellaneous business, such as reports, extracts from interesting correspondence with similar Associations, by the Corresponding Secretary; general intelligence, tending to advance the interest of the Society, and brief statements of the condition of its business affairs, *when called for*.

6. Conclusion.



# OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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## **PRESIDENT,**

F. W. McMASTER.

## **VICE-PRESIDENTS,**

Rev. E. B. HORT, Lutheran Church.

A. R. TAYLOR, Trinity Church.

Capt. J. C. WALKER, Baptist Church.

R. W. BOYD, Washington Street Methodist Church.

R. NORTH, Marion Street Methodist Church.

W. S. GOODWYN, Church of the Mediator.

R. C. BECK, Presbyterian Church.

C. W. BOYD, South Carolina College.

## **SECRETARY,**

R. D. SENN.

## **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY,**

Rev. T. J. LAMOTTE.

## **LIBRARIAN AND TREASURER,**

JOHN W. HARDY.

## BOARD OF MANAGERS.

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F. W. McMASTER,	JOHN W. HARDY,
REV. E. B. HORT,	DR. W. L. REYNOLDS,
A. R. TAYLOR,	S. P. WELSH,
J. C. WALKER,	F. A. TRADEWELL,
R. W. BOYD,	H. E. NICHOLS,
R. NORTH,	DR. O. M. ROBERTS,
W. S. GOODWYN,	DR. POWELL,
R. C. BECK,	W. RAMSAY,
C. W. BOYD,	DR. J. McF. GASTON,
REV. T. J. LAMOTTE,	G. M. FAIRLEE,
R. D. SENN,	S. W. BARKER.

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## STANDING COMMITTEE.

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Rev. E. B. HORT,	Lutheran Church.
A. R. TAYLOR,	Trinity Church.
W. S. GOODWYN,	Church of the Mediator.
Dr. W. L. REYNOLDS,	} Marion Street Meth. Church.
Dr. S. P. WELSH,	
F. A. TRADEWELL,	} Washington Street do. do.
H. E. NICHOLS,	
Dr. — POWELL,	} Baptist Church.
Dr. O. M. ROBERTS,	
W. RAMSAY,	} Presbyterian Church.
Dr. J. McF. GASTON,	
G. M. FAIRLEE,	} South Carolina College.
S. W. BARKER,	



